



Press Advisory

Following are some Agency developments which may interest you. If you need more information on any of these subjects, call the appropriate contact.

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EPA SEEKS NEW BROWNFIELDS SHOWCASE COMMUNITIES

Lauren M. Mical 202-260-4358

EPA, along with more than 20 other federal agencies, is seeking communities interested in being designated as Brownfields Showcase Communities. A partnership of federal agencies with interests in brownfields redevelopment has formed to offer special technical, financial and other assistance to selected communities. EPA is offering each Showcase Community \$200,000 in assessment funds plus the two-year loan of a federal employee to help coordinate a community's brownfields efforts. Other federal agencies support for the Showcases will depend upon the needs of a particular community. These Brownfields Showcase Communities are models demonstrating the benefits of focused attention on brownfields. To date, the federal partners have designated 16 Brownfields Showcase Communities. Now that these Showcases are up and running and yielding positive results, the federal partners plan to designate 10 additional Showcase Communities this year. These projects will promote environmental protection and restoration, economic redevelopment, job creation, community revitalization, greenspace development, energy efficiency and public health protection through the assessment, cleanup and sustainable reuse of brownfields. The pilots will develop national models demonstrating the positive results of public, private and non-governmental collaboration in addressing brownfields challenges. Brownfields are abandoned, idled or under-used industrial and commercial properties where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived contamination. The deadline for application submission is April 17, 2000. The Federal Register Notice is expected to be published Thursday, March 16. For further information about the Brownfields Showcase Communities Initiative see: www.epa.gov/brownfields.

FOUR BROWNFIELDS PREVENTION INITIATIVE PILOTS CHOSEN

Lauren M. Mical 202-260-4358

As part of EPA's Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Brownfields Prevention Initiative, EPA today announced the selection of four pilot projects that will showcase reforms to make it easier to cleanup and reuse these sites. The RCRA cleanup program, like Superfund, was designed to focus on sites posing the greatest risks to public health and the environment. The four pilots chosen include: Bethlehem Steel Corp., Lackawanna, N.Y.; Blue Valley Redevelopment Team, Kansas City, Mo.; Philadelphia Electric Company, Chester, Pa.; and CBS Bridgeport, Conn. While there is no grant money associated with these pilots, EPA has allocated contractor support to assist these pilots in finding ways to expedite cleanups that protect public health and the environment. This new initiative comes in response to concerns raised by representatives from cities, industries and others who have recently begun emphasizing the importance of looking beyond the

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) in addressing issues at brownfields sites in a more comprehensive manner. To date, EPA has focused efforts primarily on issues associated with CERCLA. Under this new initiative, EPA's goal is to help the state and local governments and the site owners find ways to expedite cleanups and allow for future reuse by using the flexibility of the existing RCRA programs. EPA hopes to identify and understand any potential impediments to cleanup and reuse of brownfields sites that may be posed under RCRA. Information about the RCRA Brownfields Prevention Initiative will soon be available at: www.epa.gov/brownfields.

NEJAC SUBMITS RECOMMENDATIONS ON WASTE TRANSFER STATIONS

Tanya Meekins 202-260-1387

The National Environmental Justice Council (NEJAC) has submitted recommendations to EPA in their report, "A Regulatory Strategy for Siting and Operating Waste Transfer Stations." The NEJAC is a federal advisory committee that provides advice, consultation and recommendations to EPA's Administrator on matters relating to environmental justice. As a result of citizens concerns, the NEJAC, through its Waste and Facility Siting Subcommittee, formed a working group to investigate the impacts of waste transfer stations in minority and low-income communities. Waste transfer stations are facilities that collect municipal waste before it is transported to a disposal site. Some of the concerns include the clustering of waste transfer stations in minority areas, human health and safety, and permitting. The Agency plans to continue discussions with state and local governments and is committed to bringing its technical and regulatory resources to address these issues. As part of the subcommittee's investigation, which began in September 1998, two fact-finding sessions were held in New York City and Washington, D.C. These sessions included first-hand tours of the waste facilities and the impacted communities, followed by public meetings. The meetings were attended by various representatives from community groups, industry groups, federal, local and state government officials. For copies of the report, contact Tanya Meekins, EPA Office of Media Relations, at 202-260-1387. If you have questions about the report, contact Mathy Stanislaus, Chair of the Waste Transfer Station Working Group, at 718-448-7916.

ENFORCEMENT WRAP-UP

Tanya Meekins 202-260-1387

OKLAHOMA CITY CORPORATION AND INDIVIDUALS INDICTED

In Oklahoma City, Amtech Corp., a manufacturer of oil field chemicals, and its co-owners were indicted on March 8 in U.S. District Court in Oklahoma City, Okla., for violating the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and the Clean Water Act. The two co-owners Stephen Lane Adkins, President, and Joel Edwin Mayhan, Vice-President, along with Virginia Malson, owner of M&M Drum Co. were all indicted. The indictment alleges that waste chemicals from the manufacturing process, including solvents, were illegally stored, transported and disposed of between 1993 and 1997. The indictment states that drums of hazardous waste were delivered to M&M Drum Co. by Amtech Corp. where the contents of the drums were poured into the Oklahoma City sewer system. The drums of the hazardous waste were also dumped in a field in Asher, Okla., and were stored and buried in Osage County, Okla. Exposure to sufficient quantities of solvents can cause a variety of diseases of the internal organs. The case was investigated by EPA's Criminal Investigation Division and is being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Oklahoma.